

CLAIM AMENDMENT(S)

(Complete Claim Listing)

1. (Currently Amended) In a lawn mower having a frame, a motor connected to the frame, a cutting blade connected to the motor, a deck located above the cutting blade and vertically movably mounted to the frame, a draft rod connected between the deck and a portion of the frame, the improvement comprising:

the draft rod being movably connected to a mounting section of the deck and longitudinally slidably connected to the portion of the frame to limit upward vertical movement of the deck relative to the frame to a predetermined upper stop location during in-use operation, the mounting section having a limiter for limiting downward rotation of the draft rod, and wherein the portion of the frame comprises an axle assembly of the lawn mower and the draft rod comprises an enlarged section located between the axle assembly and the deck.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) A lawn mower as in claim 1 ~~2~~ wherein the axle assembly comprises a hole and a portion of the draft rod is movably located in the hole.

4. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 3 wherein the portion of the draft rod is longitudinally slidable in the hole.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A lawn mower as in claim 3 & wherein the enlarged section is larger than the hole in the axle assembly.

7. (Currently Amended) A lawn mower as in claim 3 & wherein the enlarged section comprises a bent portion of the draft rod.

8. (Original) A lawn mover as in claim 1 wherein the deck comprises a bracket on an exterior side of the deck and an end of the draft rod is pivotably connected to the bracket.

9. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 8 wherein the bracket comprises a section extending beneath the draft rod which limits downward rotation of the draft rod relative to the deck.

10. (Original) A lawn mower comprising:

a frame;

a motor connected to the frame;

a cutting blade connected to the motor;

a deck vertically movably connected to the frame, the deck being located over the cutting blade;

a vertical movement limiting bar connected between the deck and a portion of the frame, the limiting bar being pivotably connected to a mounting section of the deck and longitudinally slidingly connected to the portion of the frame,

wherein the mounting section of the deck has a limiter for limiting downward rotation of the limiting bar.

11. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 10 wherein the portion of the frame comprises an axle assembly of the lawnmower.

12. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 11 wherein the axle assembly comprises a hole and a portion of the limiting bar is movably located in the hole.

13. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 12 wherein the portion of the limiting bar is longitudinally slidable in the hole.

14. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 12 wherein the limiting bar comprises an enlarged section located between the axle assembly and the deck.

15. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 14 wherein the enlarged section is larger than the hole in the axle assembly.

16. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 14 wherein the enlarged section comprises a bent portion of the limiting bar.

17. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 10 wherein the mounting section comprises a bracket on an exterior side of the deck and an end of the limiting bar is pivotably connected to the bracket.

18. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 17 wherein the limiter comprises a tab extending laterally from the bracket, the tab being located beneath a portion of the limiting bar

which limits downward rotation of the limiting bar relative to the deck.

19. (Currently Amended) A lawn mower comprising:

a frame;

a motor connected to the frame;

a cutting blade connected to the motor;

a deck vertically movably connected to the frame, the deck being located over the cutting blade;

a vertical movement limiting bar connected between the deck and a portion of the frame, the limiting bar being pivotably connected to a mounting section of the deck and longitudinally slidably connected through a hole in the portion of the frame, the mounting section having a limiter for limiting downward rotation of the limiting bar; and

wherein the limiting bar comprises a stop surface located between the deck and the portion of the frame for limiting longitudinal movement of the bar through the hole in the portion of the frame during in-use operation.

20. (Original) A lawn mower as in claim 19 wherein the limiting bar comprises a bent section which forms the stop surface.

21. (Currently Amended) In a lawn mower having a frame, a motor connected to the frame, a cutting blade connected to the motor, a deck located above the cutting blade and vertically

movably mounted to the frame, a draft rod connected between the deck and a portion of the frame, the improvement comprising:

the draft rod comprising an enlarged section and being movably connected between the deck and the portion of the frame to limit upward vertical movement of the deck relative to the frame to a predetermined upper stop location,

wherein the deck comprises a bracket on an exterior side of the deck and an end of the draft rod is pivotably connected to the bracket, and the bracket comprises a section extending beneath the draft rod which limits downward rotation of the draft rod relative to the deck.